4; Pierson Z-4,5 (1935-1937) 1967
SOll Bahia Brazilians SOll

often been heard, on the lips of older members of, particularly, Protestant churches in the United States, "These young people today are not like we used to be. It's a shame the way they stray away."

João is a young black about twenty years of age who has just completed a business course subsequent to graduation from the Ginasio da Bahia, the city's state-supported secondary school. One day, in the home of his uncle, who is a prominent figure in the fetish world, João was copying a page in Nagô. Possessed of a deep affection for his uncle and being characteristically obliging and courteous, he was attempting to learn a few words of this African language. But the impression João made on a visitor was that his efforts with Nagô arose rather from a desire to please his uncle than from any genuine interest in the language itself. João remarked, apologetically, "You know I would like to learn it, but I just don't have time when I'm working every day."

A young mulatto girl who had completed two years at a secondary school remarked, "I don't care much for the *candomblé*, except to watch the dances and to see the [ceremonial] costumes. I seldom go, and then only for some special reason. I like the movies better, especially the North American and the English films." She further remarked:

> My uncle doesn't believe in this business of the *orixás*. One day his daughter—my cousin—said that she felt an *orixá* about to "arrive." She ran all the way to a *candomblé*, began to dance, and, sure enough, "she fell into the *estado de santo*." But my uncle wouldn't stand for it. He got a sprig of *urtiga* and whipped her and then went and whipped the *pae de santo* too. The next day, my cousin couldn't bear anyone's hand on her, she was so sore. But that was the end of the *orixá*. He never came back.

José is a young mixed-blood, twenty-two years of age, employed as a janitor in one of Bahia's public buildings. Although he knows of three *seitas* near his home—one each

[SALVADOR]

/64 cont./

*563 545 [171] For about ten years people have been trying to organize a "Negro theater" in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. In spite of the assistance of white intellectuals of great influence and endowed with the spirit of initiative, the two or three groups that have been founded have had only relative success, in spite of the indisputable artistic and intellectual merit of the Blacks and mulattoes who were at their head. About two years ago, when [658] one of these groups asked for government assistance in order to give a series of performances in Bahia, the presentation of a "Negro theater" in a city such as ours, where there is no separation of races, was considered inopportune. At least this is how some people justified the refusal against it. Two small theater groups were nevertheless founded in Bahia, "to give colored persons the possibility of becoming known," as was announced in a newspaper, but neither of these groups was able to succeed in staging a play. This lack of success may be explained in different ways. One explanation might be that amateur theater enterprises, even those directed by Whites of some prestige and aided by recreational associations able to spend /Figs. 7 and 8 appear here/ /65/ quite large sums on efforts of this kind, have been intermittent in Bahia and generally require an extreme effort by amateurs of the theatrical art; another is that the persons responsible for the two undertakings were young people of mixed blood, without experience and without credit. It should be noted, besides, that, according to one of these, the idea was not popular, even among colored persons. "Everybody doubts that this venture can be successful," he said. Some have even thought that this is "a separatist idea." It is possible that other factors come into play in this tendency to discourage similar endeavors. The theater being a means of [154] [796] emotional expression, serving as a substitute for other ways of liberating emotions, one may agree with the hypothesis of Roger Bastide, according to which the colored people of Bahia satisfy themselves by means of the exciting rites of the candomblé and the external Catholic worship with its brilliant liturgical ceremonies, its frequent and large processions, and the solemn saints' days around the most popular churches (1).

[113] 1. "Teatro de 30 dias /Theater of 30 days/," Anhembi, No. 10, Vol. IV, São Paulo, Sept. 1951.